



NEWS RELEASE

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SBA WEB SITE RATED AMONG THREE BEST SITES FOR HOME OFFICES BY HOME OFFICE COMPUTING

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Small Business Administration's (SBA) award-winning Web site has garnered yet another prize, as *Home Office Computing*, a magazine aimed at the growing work-at-home workforce, published its choice of the "100 best home office products, services and sites of 2000."

The publication gave the Bronze Award in the Info/Portal Site category to the SBA site, www.sba.gov. In announcing the awards, the magazine emphasized that **"the Small Business Administration's site offers encyclopedic info on government-sponsored financing, training and advocacy."**

The Silver Award in the same category went to the Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE) Web site, www.score.org. SCORE is an SBA sponsored organization that provides free business training and advice. *Home Office Computing* said that **"it'd be a shame not to help yourself to SCORE's free, confidential one-on-one counseling (via e-mail or in person), as well as the low-cost workshops and other resources the association's 11,500 business veterans can provide."**

Home Office Computing editor in chief Eric Grevstad said: **"We are pleased to salute these products because they help home-based workers succeed ... they're just right for today's work-at-home workforce."**

The SBA Web site has won several major awards and accolades for excellence from the business, publishing and online communities over the past few years. Among them are *Forbes* Best of the Web 2000, Building Caring Communities Web Excellence Award 2000, Starting Page Top 2000, Microsoft's Best of Business Webs '97 & '98, Yahoo!'s Best Sites of '98 Award and the Eagle Award for Excellence on the Net.

The SBA Web site offers 44,800 pages of a wide variety of information on starting, financing, developing and managing a successful business, and has established itself as an invaluable resource to its users in the small business community.

"Whether you are in the thinking, planning, financing or growing stage of the business, there is something for everyone on our Web site," said Diane Gannon, director of Productivity Enhancement in the Office of Information Technology, who manages the site. **"Historically, our pages on starting a business have been the most frequently visited, but that focus is changing as more established businesses discover the wealth of information at their disposal."**

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01-13 / Page Two

Since its debut in 1994, the site online traffic has increased steadily to an all time high of over 12.7 million hits during the last week of January 2001, and a weekly average of more than 10 million hits.

The top two locations on the SBA site are *Starting Your Business* and *Financing Your Business*, both with over 1.5 million hits a week. The pages on *Business Opportunities* are running a close third, as more established firms search for information on and resources for growing their businesses.

Another very popular SBA site is Procurement Marketing and Access Network (PRO-Net). It is a powerful search engine for contractors, with an Internet-based database on more than 209,000 small, disadvantaged and women-owned businesses. It is a very effective marketing tool and a “virtual” one-stop procurement shop. Another key service is SUB-Net, which allows large businesses to post solicitations for subcontracting opportunities. Also, there is specialized information and resources for businesses involved in exporting, a growing sector of the U.S. economy.

One major feature of the site is the level of detail it provides, enhanced and refined as more SBA regional offices tailor the information to suit the specific needs and requirements of small businesses in their particular states. Site users also have praised its ease of navigation, as the site architecture follows a logical order in the natural process from *Starting and Financing Your Business* to *Business Opportunities* for further growth and development.

Much of the site information is offered in Spanish, an acknowledgement of the growing impact of the Hispanic population at large and in the small business community.

The SBA Web site also offers links to more than 5,000 outside business-related resources, making it one of the most complete sources of information available for business start-ups and development.

For more information about all of SBA's programs for small businesses, call the SBA Answer Desk at 1-800 U ASK SBA or TDD 704-344-6640. Also visit the SBA's extensive Web site at www.sba.gov.

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